UNITED NATIONS

United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court

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LETTER OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE OF PLENIPOTENTIARIES ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

7 July 1998

Dear Mr. President,

As I am sure you are aware, I am following the deliberations of the United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court with greatest interest and attention. I know that all participants attending the Conference are working extremely hard and that they spare no effort in trying to achieve the task entrusted to the Conference, which is to finalize and adopt a convention on the establishment of an international criminal court.

At the same time, it is obvious that many questions still remain to be solved. Even if it could be expected that this would be the case also at a relatively late stage of the deliberations, time is nevertheless running short. I would, therefore, like to convey to you and to the Conference my sincere hope that the participating States will find the necessary spirit of cooperation in order to be able to finalize the Statute on 17 July with a view to creating a court which is strong and independent enough to carry out its task. I reiterate what I said in my address at the opening of the Conference: The overriding interest must be that of the victims, and of the international community as a whole. The court must be an instrument of justice, not expedience. It must be able to protect the weak against the strong. It must demonstrate that an international conscience is a reality.

His Excellency
Mr. Giovanni Conso
President
United Nations Diplomatic Conference
of Plenipotentiaries on the
Establishment of an International
Criminal Court

Please accept, Mr. President, my warmest regards and best wishes for a successful outcome of the Conference.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN